September 2023 - Imagining a Highway Without Stopping

One of the biggest advantages of spending years in logistics is that you start seeing problems differently.

Most people see a toll plaza and think about paying toll tax.

We started seeing something much bigger.

Why should a vehicle stop at all?

As we continued interacting with stakeholders across transportation, logistics and infrastructure ecosystems, discussions around Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), FASTag, ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) and digital mobility were becoming increasingly common.

India had already taken a massive leap through FASTag.

Millions of vehicles were now moving through toll plazas using digital payments instead of cash transactions. Waiting times had reduced significantly and highway operations had become more efficient.

But a question kept coming back repeatedly.

What is the next step?

If FASTag can identify a vehicle and deduct toll automatically, and ANPR systems can read vehicle registration numbers through cameras, can both technologies work together to create a completely seamless movement experience?

And then another question emerged.

What if ANPR could eventually work independently?

Could vehicles move through highways without stopping?

Could tolls be collected automatically using vehicle identification systems?

Could road taxes, permits and other transportation-related charges someday become part of an integrated digital ecosystem?

These questions did not have immediate answers.

In fact, they opened up even more questions.

What happens if a number plate is damaged?

What happens if the camera reads the registration number incorrectly?

How do we handle duplicate records?

How do we ensure security and accuracy?

How do we prevent misuse?

How do we create trust in such systems?

The deeper we went, the more we realised that technology is never just about innovation.

It is about creating reliable systems that work consistently at scale.

Looking Beyond Today's Problems

Historically, transportation systems have evolved in stages.

First came manual toll collection.

Then came digitisation.

Then FASTag.

The next phase was likely to be driven by intelligent infrastructure, connected mobility and real-time vehicle identification.

Globally, several countries were already experimenting with barrier-free tolling systems where vehicles no longer needed to stop.

India was also moving in the same direction through discussions around ANPR-based tolling and intelligent transportation systems.

For us, this was exciting.

Not because it was a new technology trend.

But because it aligned perfectly with a belief we had held for years.

Every minute a truck spends waiting is a loss for the economy.

Every unnecessary stop increases inefficiency.

Every manual process creates friction.

And every friction point creates additional costs somewhere in the supply chain.

The future had to be smoother.

The future had to be connected.

The future had to move faster.

From Logistics to Mobility Innovation

As these discussions progressed, we started engaging with various stakeholders, authorities and ecosystem participants to better understand how such innovations could be implemented effectively.

Our objective was never limited to solving load matching or transportation visibility challenges.

We wanted to understand how technology could improve the complete movement ecosystem.

Whether it was freight movement, tolling, compliance, vehicle identification or operational efficiency, the common goal remained the same:

Reduce friction.

Increase transparency.

Improve efficiency.

Create trust.

The more we explored these possibilities, the more evident it became that logistics and transportation were no longer operating as separate domains.

Everything was becoming interconnected.

Road infrastructure.

Vehicle technology.

Digital payments.

Data systems.

Compliance frameworks.

Logistics operations.

All of them were slowly converging into one larger ecosystem.

Startup Lessons from September 2023

This phase taught us an important lesson.

Startups should not only solve current problems.

They should also prepare for future opportunities.

Most innovations begin with simple questions.

Questions that may initially sound unrealistic.

Questions that challenge existing assumptions.

Questions that force people to imagine a different future.

For us, the question was simple:

Why should a vehicle stop at all?

That question led us into conversations about intelligent transportation systems, ANPR, digital tolling, integrated mobility and the future of highway infrastructure.

Not every question produces an immediate solution.

But every meaningful innovation starts with curiosity.

And sometimes, the future belongs to those willing to ask questions before the rest of the market starts looking for answers.

September 2023 became one of those months where we were not just thinking about logistics.

We were thinking about the future of movement itself.